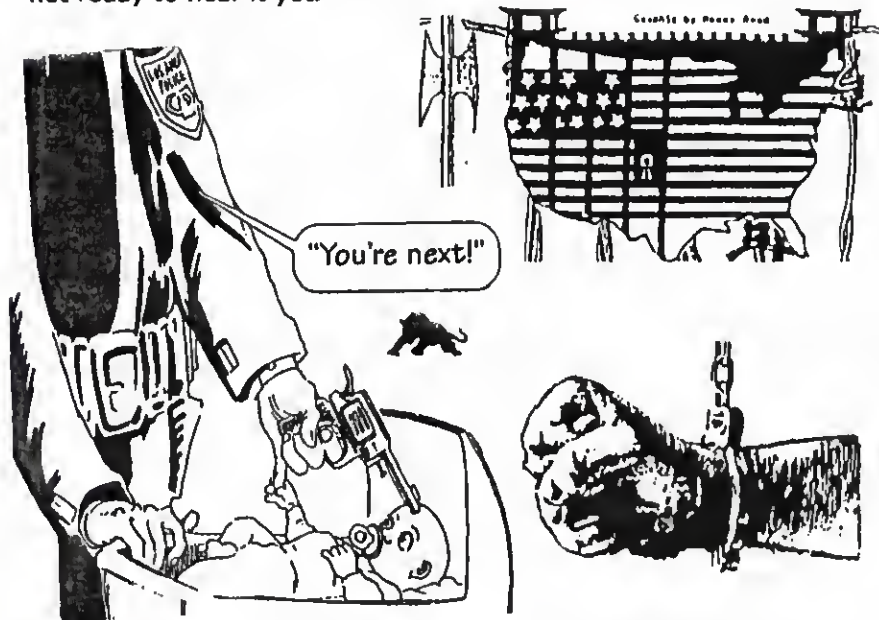


Then he talked about the fact that he didn't believe that capitalism, "as it was constructed, could meet the needs of poor people," and that "what we might need to look at was a kind of socialism, but a democratic form of socialism." Another example of King's position was recalled in a conversation between him and William A. Rutherford, a Chicago native and Europe-based businessman who volunteered his skills to the SCLC. Rutherford criticized black capitalism and its basic objective being "to replace white bastards with black bastards. If the whole thrust of assuring oneself profit is to exploit whoever's there, what the hell are we doing with black people, trying to put them in the same position where you have to exploit someone else to turn your profit?" King replied, "Bill, there's so much to be done that people are not ready to do right now. Obviously, we've got to have some form of socialism, but America's not ready to hear it yet."



This essay is being written inside prison, where only a limited amount of reference materials are permitted. My quotes from King and others are drawn from notes taken from his biography, entitled *Bearing the Cross*, a copy of which I do not have on hand, so I cannot provide specific page numbers from which the quotes were taken, nor do I have the author's name; however, these sources should not be difficult to locate by any curious researcher on the outside.

Kevin (Rashid) Johnson 185492
Red Onion State Prison
P.O. Box 1900
Pound, Virginia 24279

SOUTH CHICAGO ABC
ZINE DISTRO
POB 721 HOMEWOOD IL 60430

An Answer to Today's Black Entertainment Media Kevin "Rashid" Johnson

I write this as a brother confined in prison, isolated a hundred miles from the nearest urban center, sitting atop a remote mountain in a rural, white-populated region of the south. Here, the overwhelmingly black prisoner population has little to no contact with the ever-flourishing black urban culture.

By happenstance, I found myself in possession of and reading cover-to-cover the October 2004 issue of *Sister 2 Sister*, a magazine whose professed motto is that of "Givin' it to ya straight, no chaser." Well, to put this motto to the test, I've asked them to print this essay--which likely they won't. I'm writing this essay because my reading of that and similar magazines leaves my heart heavy; some of the reasons are what follows:

From the editor's interview with actor/comedian Jamie Foxx (pages 62-73), one could see the still-pervasive tendency in black folks here--continuing since slavery--to try and measure up to the white supremacist, capitalistic elite status quo, to prove that "we" are just as good as "them" by winning acclaim and recognition in fields that they've told us are important, to acquire material tokens and status symbols they've manufactured and that they've trained us to think are measures of human worth, to seek advancement and acceptance always with heads bowed and feet shuffling. Meanwhile, we're dying--both as a race and as a culture.

The only remnants of a culture we have left are steeped in our aping the dominant material-worshipping one, a deformed sub-culture imitating Mr. Charlie.¹ Our only use-value here in Amerika still remains that of being clowns (entertainers) and servants, while our brain trusts (black intellectuals) are distanced from the needy black masses, co-opted into white suburbia, and then sapped of their talents and skills to refine and keep Mr. Charlie's system steadily expanding and running smoothly and to keep him saddled at the cost of human suffering the world over and within our own poor communities.

From rap diva Lil' Kim's interview (pages 40-51), I see a confused young sister being drained, tossed, and used by a greed-motivated industry she doesn't understand, a sister who's been used to, among other things, perpetuate the idea in black minds that for us to amount to anything in this world we must become white. Supporting such racist notions by undergoing surgeries and cosmetic changes that dilute and disguise racial and ethnic identity, projecting the image for our young sisters to emulate and imitate that the extent of their worth is determined by their physical assets (breasts and asses) and their willingness to flaunt them in skimpy garb.

Do we care that the images promoted by celebrities, who are in fact seen as role models, create cultural norms that our children imitate, that they come to perceive as the essence of their human worth? Our people are being pimped and misled by an industry that cares nothing about the destructive effects the images it portrays have on us as a people. The CEO's and CFO's of Warner Bros., BMG, Sony, EMI, and Universal don't live in the hood and don't visit the hood. Theirs is an industry that cares about nothing but market shares and maximizing profits. To them the hood represents a vast market of consumers, and black entertainers are their means of routing black dollars into their own coffers. They are motivated by the same insensitive, greed-based self-interests that motivated white male plantation elites to subject our forefathers and mothers to two hundred and fifty years of the most savage, brutal, and inhuman form of enslavement ever suffered by any people in history.

We've ended in adopting the very same opportunistic, anti-human, insensitive, and greed-driven values that we've long been victims of. On one hand, we passionately criticize what was done to our ancestors during chattel slavery as one of history's worst evils, yet on the other, we're oblivious to the fact that all of the vast wealth that America maintains today (centered in its elite white male monopolized multinational corporate powers and military industry)--spoils we aspire to share in--come from the enslavement of people *today*--people of color in the third world.

The third world is underdeveloped today solely because America and other western nations force their people under violent compulsion by propped-up puppet governments and militaries (armed, trained, supplied, and advised by the US) to mine and farm and then export their own natural resources and agriculture to these western countries, while preventing them from accessing the technologies and developing the skills needed to industrially develop and thus compete economically with the western powers, meantime being forced to grow crops to be exported to these dominant countries and forbidden to grow foods needed to feed their own people.

Those people live in slavery, in many instances as brutal as what our forebears suffered. And when those people rise up to take control of their own lands and lives, to try and feed their families, the American-backed militaries massacre them (men, women, children, the elderly--indiscriminately). We need not even travel outside this hemisphere for clear examples of such. Take the hundreds of thousands of common peasants slaughtered with official US backing and arms in Central America during the 1960's, '70's, and '80's. Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador. The same policies are playing out today and are behind US financial and military aid to Columbia. The US is also ready to back an attack on Venezuela's popularly supported Chavez government because it rejects the FTAA and US domination of its economy and resources.²

another world. The modern alternative pressure release for the less religious amongst us is the weekly all-night booty-shaking sessions at the club. In place of the dignifying big flashy hats and special // tailored suits and dresses that distinguished us in churches, in the club scene we've substituted equally flashy but more revealing hip-hop or casual ensembles. Little has changed for us, except that today, like happy lemmings, we are marching toward a mass grave bling-bling and booty-shaking to the rhythm of our own death-drum, while the mainstream black media adds gloss and glitter to this mindless death parade.

Kevin "Rashid" Johnson
November 2004

Notes:

¹ When I make reference to Mr./Massa Charlie, this is not a term that generalizes and embraces all whites, but refers to the capitalist corporate elite (who happen to be a minority white male class) who own and monopolize the US economy, government, and influential social institutions, through which they manufacture a white-supremacist, material-worshipping, individualist, jingoist, chauvinist, and competitive dominant culture within US society.

² Venezuela has the world's sixth largest oil reserves and is one of America's top suppliers, yet over seventy percent of its population lives in miserable poverty.

³ In the column entitled "The Name Game" by Russ Parr (pages 80-81), black parents are encouraged to cater to racism in US corporate hiring, by not naming their children in ways which allow them to be identifiable as black on job résumés. This is because résumés submitted by job applicants having black-sounding names are routinely passed over for hiring consideration. For us, there is no option for fair access employment, and integration, and integration for us into a society that demonstrably does not accept us as equal means, for us, ceasing to be and wanting to be identifiable as black people.

⁴ King came to totally reject capitalism yet realized that he could not openly expose this to the masses of people who looked to him for guidance, because the US and its corporate elites were waging brutal wars directly--as in Vietnam--and indirectly to violently crush all who resisted capitalist domination and who fought for national independence from western political, economic, military, and cultural domination. He knew that to openly promote this would mean imminent death. Speaking in 1968 to staff members of Jesse Jackson's black capitalist Breadbasket program, a staff member recalled, King "asked us to turn off the tape recorder." He talked about what he called democratic socialism, and he said, "I can't say this publicly, and if you say I said it, I'm not going to admit it,..."

nothing until they'd killed all whites--rich and poor. Our national independence struggles in the 1960's and '70's were painted to the public in the same light by the US government and corporate media, in order to alienate whites and many blacks against our struggle. During slavery it was inconceivable to the plantation-owning Mr. Charlie for us to break away from him and his rule, just as it is inconceivable to the big business Mr. Charlie for us to do this today. Then, as now, his created racism claimed us to be too stupid and backward by nature to do such a thing, and that without his tutelage, guidance, rule, and economic domination, we'd self-destruct. With this reverse-psychology we were made to feel dependent upon him and thus to willingly remain his servants, which is why he will not expose the fact that only since we, and the peoples of Africa, Asia, Australia, and the Americas, fell under just such rule and domination, have our people and societies become self-destructive, and all to the exclusive profit and expansion of western capitalist power.

Those we see today as our heroes, who fought and died against chattel slavery, were then classified by Mr. Charlie as terrorists. They were violently stalked, hunted, mutilated, killed, and put down by poor whites and the US government, but this did not discourage them. Yet today we are used to brutally repress the third world people in order to keep them in conditions of slavery, enriching western powers and impoverishing themselves by extracting their natural wealth for and selling their hard labor dirt-cheap to the west. Those who resist these conditions (those who strike back at Mr. Charlie, his mercenaries, and his collaborators) are labeled terrorist threats to western civilization. It's the same old wine in new bottles.

We've gone from a race of rebellious field niggers to one of collaborating house niggers. We're so proud of being able to rub shoulders with Massa Charlie and his elite underlings, to receive his pat on the head for being loyal and obedient to him. So desperately do we desire his acceptance and approval and fear provoking his displeasure and criticism that we go to any lengths to please him, including destroying our children, and killing ourselves and others in the process.

But when reality sets in a little too painfully for our liking, instead of taking courage in hand and confronting the problem at the root, we limit ourselves--as our enslaved ancestors were expected to do--to looking to the sky for deliverance, while accepting the lash with the complacent and mindless dignity of trained mules. Thus the religion taught to us by the old slave master Charlie (which we still practice today) conditioned us never to resist or question anyone whom the old slaver appointed as a claimed authority over us. It became and still is for us a tranquilizer that robbed us of the will to fight back, a narcotic to keep us in a mindless stupor, a pressure release that had us singing, shouting, screaming, and crying out our pain and desperation in the all-black churches, and a source of hope for a more fulfilling existence in

3
But like the house niggers of old, we choose not to know or see this, because we want to be accepted by Massa Charlie, to share in the spoils he's gained at the misery of our brothers and sisters. In fact, we're in Iraq now, massacring people of color, primarily civilians--women and children--so to aid Amerika's white male ruling elite (all Rockefeller connected) to take control of the world's second-largest oil reserves (located in Iraq), so they can monopolize the world oil market, and thereby regain dominant control over the transnational capitalist economy, a position the Amerikan wealthy elite lost in the 1970's, and who've been steadily losing ground on account of competition from the expanding euro-based capitalist bloc in Europe. We remain enslaved to a political and economic system that we don't understand. We're being wooed and confused by Massa Charlie's lackeys who look like us and talk with oiled tongues, while pretending to represent us.

Then we cannot forget that the US exists on the land that it does today because it officially massacred and forcefully relocated millions of natives to clear them off the land, much as Amerika has militarily and financially backed Israel in doing to the Palestinians since 1948, though outright racist genocide and destruction of their communities with alcohol and casinos (for us it's narcotics and the club.) The Indians have been reduced to less than one percent of their own native land and population. Amerika is a land of settlers living on territory, much of which was never legally ceded by the First Nations. And, like the Palestinians today, those Indians who fought back, resisting genocide and forced removal from their land, which the whites sought to settle and claim as their own, were demonized as being uncivilized aggressors and terrorists.

Were it not for us (African people), there would be no Amerika. We taught the early European settlers how to till the land and tend livestock, how to openly graze cattle--skills which we brought with us from Africa, which were alien to the Europeans, skills they sorely needed when they were on the verge of starvation here, following the back-stabbing of the Indians who first welcomed and aided them. It was we who left the southern plantations in droves (causing them economic chaos) and fought with the Union Army, leading to the confederate defeat. Yet the US promise to us of land in exchange for our military service was broken. The Union Army, in complicity with the Ku Klux Klan, drove us off the promised land we began occupying and developing, from whose violence and terror we fled north to the cities (and west) as refugees and were there herded into the ghettos where we remain today...the hood.

But for us, Amerika would never have become an advanced industrial nation. It was our free slave labor in cotton production that allowed the US to undergo the industrial revolution, which grew out of the cotton-based textile industry that flourished in the Union states, the very industry around which the Union was built, and which provided factory work for the vast numbers of poor European immigrants. In fact, it was the competition for dominance between

the northern industrial elites and the southern plantation elites in 4
their westward expansion that prompted the American civil war. But
today, after all the years of slavery and service, death, and misery,
we have nothing to show for our ordeals and contributions, except a
subculture of materialism and individualism which apes the
dominant culture of our historical oppressor.

In fact, we still contribute the earning of our hard labor to
maintaining a social order (through compulsory taxation) that
refuses to use those contributions to improve our overall quality of
life and living standard, cutting our access to social benefits,
denying our access to healthcare and job security, etc. Indeed, Bill
Clinton, the pretended champion of Black America, knocked ten
million people off welfare (out of fifteen million total recipients),
driving more poor people to compete in a steadily shrinking job
market, and then put some 150,000 more police on the streets to
lock up those driven to "crime" by force of economic and emotional
desperation and frustration. Meantime you had and have the steady
expansion of the largest prison system in the world to warehouse
those people.

The interview with singer Monica (pages 90-97) painfully
brought home the fact that whatever the apparent financial
achievements of a few celebrity black individuals, life for us as a
people here in America is a never-ending tragedy, plagued with
insecurity, violent death, and police oppression. This theme was
consistent in all three of the interviews with Jamie Foxx, Lil' Kim,
and Monica, the lives of black "celebrities" being no exception, that
despite our claims to material accomplishment in the US, we own
nothing, control nothing, and remain adrift in a society that we
neither know nor understand. A condition that will remain
unchanged as long as we continue to accept rule by outside forces,
forces alien to us, that mislead and misrepresent us, exploit and
neglect us, profit off us, that use us to conquer others, to hate and
destroy its foes (including ourselves), distort and conceal our
history and struggles, jails and kills our true leaders, leaves us a
confused and insecure people who vent our pain, frustration, and
desperation against each other, gives token positions of political
power to self-interested opportunistic blacks who pretend to
represent us, and warehouses us in prisons.

During the 1950's through the '70's, the peoples of Asia and
Africa waged determined military and political struggles to win
national independence and to overthrow European rule over them.
The various politically independent countries in Africa today are the
result of those struggles. As already noted, the ongoing political,
military, and economic turmoil in those countries today stems from
continued western interferences, interventions, and manipulations
in their political and economic affairs, so to keep their vast stores of
natural wealth flowing out of their countries and to the west. Much
as US corporate power keeps the wealth, labor, and brainpower of
the black communities flowing out of those communities and into its
power centers here in America--leaving our communities in poverty

do not count on government good will, but instead serve to compel
unwilling authorities to yield to the mandates of justice." 9

In February 1968 he told a Selma, Alabama, rally: "We're
dealing in a sense with class issues...with the problem of the gulf
between the haves and the have-nots." 4 He therefore organized a
"Poor People's Campaign" set to march on Washington, but this
time to shut the capital down. In the "Statement of Purpose"
document issued by the SCLC explaining the march's objective, it
was stated "we are now more sophisticated," because "we can now
see ourselves as the powerless poor trapped within the
economically oriented power structure." "The right to vote or eat in
any restaurant, while important...does not actually affect conditions
of living," and that the campaign hoped to force economic
empowerment of all poor people "enabling them to control their
own lives." King expressed, "our economy must become more
person-centered than property-centered and profit-centered... it
must therefore not think of our movement as one that seeks to
integrate the Negro into...the existing values of American society."
Only months before the march was set to occur, and after being
relentlessly threatened, stalked, and hounded by the FBI, King was
assassinated.

Today we are divided sharply against ourselves, confused and
diverted, while the US rulers systematically invalidate and revoke
the civil rights reforms passed to pacify us over forty years ago.
Self-hate is a principal tool used to drive us to kill, exploit, and
oppress ourselves, much as was done during our chattel
enslavement, except then it was the poor whites who were used to
violently contain and repress us and to kill those who rebelled. This
was done by the ruling wealthy white class (who needed African
slave labor to keep them enriched and their economy running
smoothly) conditioning the poor whites to fear and hate us.
Originally both the Africans and poor European immigrants shared a
common status of indentured servitude. However, the wealthy
whites had to create a division between the two, because frequent
united rebellions of these servants threatened to destroy their rule.
In fact, the united armed Bacon's Rebellion (1676) temporarily
overthrew the colonial government in Virginia and captured the
capital at Jamestown. Thereafter, a permanent hereditary slavery of
Africans was codified (1682) and white bond-slavery phased out.
The resultant poor whites were given a sense of superior social
status over the African chattel slaves and thereupon used as a
colonial police to violently repress, break, and control the Africans.
It was in this process that racialized white supremacy was born
here in North America, and prevails till today. The plantation elite
used the same divisive scheme here as did the Belgians in Rwanda,
the Spanish and Portuguese in Central, South, and portions of North
America, and European imperialism throughout the third world.
Divide, agitate, and rule.

The poor whites were given to see in any African slave revolt
a threat to white civilization, and a desire by blacks to stop at

to make us passively accept our enslavement.

Indeed, I shook my head sadly at Jamie Foxx's unembarrassed description of himself sitting by passively, trying to reason philosophically with pigs as they beat him and his little sister in a racially motivated attack. This while she stood alone exchanging blows with them in defense of them both. For us, cowardice has become honorable, despite the fact that passive resistance proved a failed tactic for us long ago. Even Martin Luther King Jr. admitted as much after years of promoting this tactic. He stated on November 11, 1967, to his longtime friend and Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) board member Reverend D. E. King, "I have found out that all I have been doing in trying to correct this system in America has been in vain. I am trying to get at the roots of it to see just what ought to be done. The whole thing will have to be done away with."

Then, for those of us who do find work, job security is nonexistent, particularly in this contracting economy where there are not enough jobs to employ even the white workers who have union backing. And when invoked by whites, this union power basically eliminated the possibility of blacks competing with them for "respectable" work and "good" wages, leaving us to do exactly what we are doing now: overflowing US prisons--the irony being that as we languish, forgotten and with minds rotting, inside these steel and concrete human warehouses, the government will provide us freely with the very necessities that it denies us out in society; the denial of which drove most of us to "crime" (food, clothing, shelter, medical care).³

It seems likely that in a few generations we will cease to exist as a people here in Amerika, as would very likely be the case today for the small numbers of remaining Native Americans, had they elected as a people to accept integration into Amerikan values and culture. Our brothers are abandoning our sisters, and in turn our sisters are doing the same, especially in the cases of us locked behind prison walls. Today's trend with our youth is that of pimping our sisters, regarding them as property, objects to be bought and sold on the market, which is the very way that we were regarded during slavery--viz, as property.

Martin Luther King Jr. foresaw things coming to pass for us just as they have, which is why during the final three years of his life he came to reject our integration into Amerika absent fundamental change. His views of Amerika at the time of his death in 1968 were vastly different from those he held in 1963 when he gave his "I Have a Dream" speech during the Washington March. But the US corporate media will only give us the 1963 version of King. In November 1967, he announced to a new SCLC program advisory board: "Something is wrong with capitalism as it stands here in the US. We are not interested in being integrated into this value structure." That same month he expressed at his Frogmore retreat: "The decade of 1955 to 1965...misled us....we must formulate a new program, and we must fashion new tactics which

and chaos.

Yet we blacks here in Amerika never even crossed that first hurdle of winning political independence. The US government brutally repressed our national independence struggles in the 1960's and '70's, killing and jailing our leaders, sowing division within the movement, and replacing them with integrationist civil rights reforms (to appease us because we were tearing shit up in major cities all across Amerika), reforms which today are being systematically rolled back.

All we've gained is the ability to ape Massa Charlie, to wear his clothes, to buy his cars, to whiten our appearances with surgery and cosmetics, to die in his wars and on street corners, to fill his prisons, to persist in proving to ourselves and anyone who might take notice that we ain't as stupid and backward as his racism has always projected us to be, because we can imitate him and thus be recognized as "the first black to..." We perceive such

"accomplishments" to be an honor--historically significant moments in black achievement. But unlike Mr. Charlie, we have no political power, no sovereign territory, no one to enforce our demands, no military, no dominant culture, and no economy; we only have the privilege of trying to fit into Mr. Charlie's world. And somehow we fail to notice that *none* of those blacks who've gained positions of political power have changed conditions in favor of the masses of poor and economically insecure American blacks.

No wonder Mr. Charlie is so arrogant and has such an over-inflated ego. By dividing and individualizing us, he now has an entire race of people, whom he once had to fight tooth-and-nail to control, willingly under his thumb, accepting and promoting his politics, competing against and killing themselves, entertaining him, acting as his political running dogs, serving as his mercenaries, slave breakers, and cannon fodder to repress their own brothers and sisters in the third world, and all just to win his acceptance and approval, again, to eat at his table, to wear his clothes (or a comical imitation of them), to be like him. And his reward to us has been perpetual economic insecurity, premature death, substandard healthcare (even for those of us who can "afford" it), media stereotyping and misrepresentation, police brutality, racial profiling, social division, and political impotence (voting means nothing when we do not choose the candidates, when "our" candidates are chosen for us, when we are thrown off the ballot as occurred in the last two presidential elections, and when we have no part in counting the ballots--"it's not those who cast votes that determine the outcome of an election but those who count them.")

When one partner in a relationship suffers continuous humiliation, abuse, neglect, degradation, and disadvantage, common sense and human right drive that partner to demand separation. It must be remembered that in our case we were not willing and voluntary partners to this relationship to begin with--indeed, this forced coupling was something akin to rape, and somehow we've come to embrace our attacker and his ethic. But as

with any divorce, that partner who demands separation has a right to a share of the wealth that s/he helped to produce. If that share is not relinquished voluntarily, then s/he has a right to take it by force.

In that October 2004 issue of *Sister 2 Sister*, in the "letter to the editor" section (pages 104-111), I found particularly disturbing the grievances of some sisters, specifically concerning the "trend" of brothers passing them up for women of other races--the white race in particular. I first found a fundamental contradiction in that there was no criticism of black women's own roles in promoting this trend by their projecting images which imply that white and white-like features embody a standard of "beauty" superior to genuinely Africanoid features, e.g. the trend of wearing straightened and blond-dyed hair, light-colored contact lenses, etc. This tendency on both sides of rejecting Africanoid beauty are but expressions of self-hatred, insecurity, inferiority complexes, and negative self-images instilled in us during the processes of chattel slavery, Jim Crow, etc.

But let me not seem to deny the fact that *all* sisters are sisters whatever their complexion. To accept otherwise would be to pander to the same dangerous racism that fueled the genocidal war in 1994 between Rwanda's Hutu and Tutsi people, leaving hundreds of thousands dead, while the west sat by as spectators.

Beginning in 1916, when the Belgians (Europeans) brutally colonized that region of Africa, they instigated a division between the then-united Hutus and Tutsis, by telling the Tutsis (who had lighter skin, taller statures, and thinner features than the Hutus) that they were more European-looking and thus should see themselves as the Hutu's superiors, much the same scheme that was done during and since slavery to divide mulattoes against dark blacks, and in North and South America to divide mestizos against pure Indians. The Belgians rewrote those African peoples' own histories to falsely project the Tutsis as a noble class and the Hutus as an underclass. Only Tutsis were permitted to attend Belgian schools, being educated into the values of their oppressors, resulting in an antagonistic divide being created between the two groups that exists till today.

When the wave of national independence struggles swept Africa beginning in the 1950's, the more educated and organized Tutsis agitated for independence from Belgian rule. The Belgians then backed and organized the Hutus to repress the Tutsis. Rwanda still gained political independence in 1962, but the newly organized Hutus took government power and stripped the Tutsis of land. The fratricidal war in 1994 was a struggle by the Tutsis to retake power in Rwanda, all of this resulting from the Belgians' creating division within a common racial group so to secure their own power. A similar device exists between blacks here in America. Indeed, Jamie Foxx in his interview described an incident where he and his sister were beaten up by some light-complexioned black cops working in an uppity casino who were notorious for abusing darker blacks.

These same tendencies are played up by black entertainment media

who tend to project only light-complexioned and surgically and/or cosmetically whitewashed blacks as attractive, leading us to forget that we are a common people with a common heritage and history of oppression.

Just as many (but definitely not all) of today's mestizo descendants from the native peoples of South, Central, and North America no longer recognize their Indian ancestry, and instead identify themselves as Latino/a. They forget that the Latin people were/are the Europeans (Spanish and Portuguese) who invaded, conquered, and colonized their lands, destroyed their civilizations, enslaved and massacred their people, and even completely exterminated some of the native ethnic groups--as was done by the celebrated Spaniard Christopher Columbus to the peaceful Arawaks of Hispaniola (modern-day Haiti and Dominican Republic, both of which are today majority black because of African slaves having been brought in to replace the decimated Arawaks). Now, many of the native descendants today have taken on the identity of their historic Latin oppressors.

Our knowledge of world - and our - history is shallow, our attention spans short. All we've been conditioned to care about is losing ourselves and our minds in entertainment and gratification. On the same hand, we're selling our youth a dream that the entertainment industry (becoming clowns) will provide us a foot-up in the world. We saturate them with images of obscene wealth that they cannot obtain except by treading on others and through illegitimate capitalist channels, channels that have us dropping like flies in the streets, overflowing these prisons where we cease to be able to reproduce, and destroying what's left of our communities. And the images, the role models presented in them by the entertainment industry only encourage this self-destructive behavior.

Neither will Mr. Charlie's schools provide us upward mobility. They only train us to think like him, to support and accept his claimed right to rule and dominate us (as the Belgians did with the Tutsis), to forget our community-based culture as a people, to care nothing about anyone but our individual selves. Straight A's and college degrees may provide a few middle-class options for a few of us, but these few will still be living only a paycheck or two away from poverty; they will have little to no options for spending quality time with their children, and they will still be perceived and treated as second-class citizens. Even those who find wealth are still targeted with attacks from police, trumped-up lawsuits, derogatory media stereotyping, and general humiliation. In his interview, Jamie Foxx made this quite clear. In order for black celebrities to find recognition and respect, they've had to create a black-only celebrity circle and counterculture that imitates Mr. Charlie's. Why? Because they are not accepted as peers and equals by and within "mainstream" circles. Yet we're still skinning and grinning, begging to be accepted, proving our moral superiority by taking shit in the face with a smile, as Mr. Charlie trained us to do long ago in order